

Here again is a rich field for wise and good legislation. Let the State Board of Health be given large powers in this matter

AND THEN

TUBERCULOSIS.

Let it provide for proper classification and reporting of all cases of tuberculosis. Let it make good and proper rules for the guidance of the people, and give it authority to enforce them. Further, let us have a Tuberculosis Commission with enough funds at its disposal to do something toward the education of the people to the dreadful and needless slaughter of one-tenth of their number by this one preventable disease. And in good time let the state show as much wisdom in the financial care of its people as private institutions exhibit. Insurance companies in Germany have a number of sanatoria for the care of their insured when they get infected with tuberculosis; and it pays them. Recently, the Woodmen of America, a fraternal organization that pays death benefits, has perceived the wisdom, from a purely commercial standpoint, of the same thing; and they have established, at Colorado Springs, a sanatorium for their tuberculous members. Then let our legislators wake up to the importance of this matter to our people, in dollars and cents, if you please, and let them provide, through the State Board of Health, for a state sanatorium for the care of those incipient cases of tuberculosis in people who might readily be cured of the disease and placed, once more, upon a wage earning and producing basis. Is it not a matter of simple common sense? If insurance companies think so—and have proved it—why should not a well administered state effect the same saving of life—and dollars? The question has come up many times before and the matter of proper control has been the stumbling block. But if the control is placed where it belongs, with the State Board of Health, and if that board is kept absolutely out of politics, the problem is solved. Is it not so? Let us not play with public health—and lives; let us have a health department of the state that will mean just that, and let it have all the authority and all the means necessary actually to care for the health of the people of our state. There is opportunity for very much good legislation here, if our legislators want to do something for the good of the people as against the good of the many large vested interests; if hogs and dollars shall not receive first consideration.

The aborigine showed more consideration for the demented than do we, his civilized successors.

AND OUR ASYLUMS.

The treatment of the insane or those alleged to be insane, and particularly their commitment, is a stench in the nostrils. The whole thing is steeped in politics for the reason, forsooth, that there is some patronage connected with the asylums and some fees connected with the transporting of the demented to the place of their confinement. The asylum board, or whatever its actual title may be, is merely a patronage bureau. Our present laws, by inference and statement, place the demented person in the criminal class and regard him not as one

stricken with the most unfortunate of illnesses. A "warrant" must be issued and he must be "arrested"; witnesses must be brought before the judge who know the "accused." All these preliminary steps are in the hands of the sheriff or one of his deputies. The unfortunate is first put in jail and not infrequently in the same cell with a convict. And when commitment is ordered, the victim is turned over to a deputy sheriff to take to the asylum. The deputy, totally ignorant of insanity and usually terrified, resorts to all sorts of restraint which is generally cruel in the extreme and calculated to greatly aggravate the upset mental condition. The records of our asylums show innumerable cases where the greatest brutality has been exhibited toward some victim of dementia. In one instance a perfectly harmless patient was first tied about with rope, then rolled in a mattress and this in turn carefully roped, something over a hundred feet of rope being used—to tie up a harmless sick person. All this might easily be avoided by providing, as is the case in New York, that a trained attendant should be sent from the asylum to get the patient at the place of detention (and this should not be a filthy and vermin-infested cell in a jail) and take him to the asylum. But here again we run into trouble, for sheriffs' deputies get fees for this work; and that is part of the patronage of politics; another case of "dollars before life." Is it not worth while to take enough heed for the welfare of our people to get the asylum out of politics? Why not place their supervision where it also belongs, in the State Board of Health? Surely it is a matter of health and not a question of crime, and those who supervise the health of our state should have charge of its various institutions—all of them.

Heretofore it has been customary to refer all bills relating to medicine or kindred subjects to committees of the Senate and Assembly on "Public Health and Quarantine."

ABOUT THE COMMITTEES.

This year the custom has been somewhat changed, in that, while the rule holds so far as the Senate is concerned, in the Assembly a new committee has been formed entitled a "Committee on Medical and Dental Laws." The Senate Committee on "Public Health and Quarantine" is made up as follows: Louis H. Roseberry, chairman, 33rd District, Santa Barbara; James B. Holohan, 29th District, Watsonville; H. S. G. McCartney, 38th District, Los Angeles; W. F. Price, 8th District, Santa Rosa; John W. Stetson, 15th District, Oakland. In the Assembly the "Committee on Medical and Dental Laws" is composed as follows: Thomas H. Silver, Chairman, 46th District, Pleasanton; E. J. Callan, 39th District, 162 23rd Ave., San Francisco; W. R. Flint, 58th District, Hollister; Walter R. Leeds, 70th District, Los Angeles; Frank Otis, 47th District, Alameda; Harry Polsley, 5th District, Red Bluff; Charles Lightner, 45th District, 524 Montgomery street, San Francisco. Write to some or all of these gentlemen—and do it at once—telling them that the present medical